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FEBRUARY 7, 2023 BY RONNIE

Senate Bill S-257: Entrenching “Political Belief Or Activity” As Protected Human Rights

With everything that’s going on lately in politics, it’s rare to have something positive to report. However, there is a possible gem in the works. Senate Bill S-257 was introduced by in late 2021 (Conservative) Senator Salma Ataullahjan. Granted, it hasn’t passed, but is still noteworthy.

If this, or something similar get does pass, it would entrench “political belief or activity” as protected grounds within the Human Rights Code of Canada.

> Canadian Human Rights Act
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> 1 Section 2 of the Canadian Human Rights Act is replaced by the following:
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> Purpose
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> 2 The purpose of this Act is to extend the laws in Canada to give effect, within the purview of matters coming within the legislative authority of Parliament, to the principle that all individuals should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have and to have their needs accommodated, consistent with their duties and obligations as members of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability, ***political belief or activity*** or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.

> 2 Subsection 3(1) of the Act is replaced by the following:
> Prohibited grounds of discrimination
> 3 (1) For all purposes of this Act, the prohibited grounds of discrimination are race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability, ***political belief or activity*** and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.

Of course, this has the potential to stand other legislation on its head.

Would Bill C-16 (gender identity) have to be reworked or thrown out? Would it now be protected speech to say that men are men, and women are women? What about laws to put Holocaust deniers in prison? What about Iqra Khalid’s M-103 (Islamophobia) Motion from several years ago? What about “hate speech” restrictions criticizing immigration and multiculturalism? What about anti-lockdown protests over the last few years that violated “public health” orders from unelected bureaucrats?

It’s entirely possible Bill S-257 will never pass. However, it does have the potential to invalidate draconian legislation on the grounds of free speech. We’ll have to see.

(1) https://www.parl.ca/legisinfo/en/bills?page=2
(2) https://www.parl.ca/legisinfo/en/bill/44-1/s-257
(3) https://sencanada.ca/en/senators/ataullahjan-salma/
(4) https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/44-1/bill/S-257/first-reading

CANADA, CANADIAN BILLS, FREE SPEECH, HUMAN RIGHTS